

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Cancelled).

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): A method of attaching hydrophilic species to hydrophilic macromolecules immobilized on a hydrophobic surface, said method comprising the steps:

- (i) providing a hydrophobic surface,
- (ii) immobilizing hydrophilic macromolecules on the hydrophobic surface,
- (iii) exposing the hydrophilic macromolecules immobilized on the hydrophobic surface to hydrophilic species, whereby the hydrophilic species are attached to the hydrophilic macromolecules.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that the hydrophilic species comprises nanoparticles.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that the hydrophilic species is in solution.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, comprising the additional step:

- (iv) growing the attached hydrophilic species to a larger size.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 5, characterized in that growing the attached hydrophilic species to a larger size is achieved by exposing the attached hydrophilic species to an electroless plating solution.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that immobilizing the hydrophilic macromolecules on the hydrophobic surface occurs by applying the hydrophilic macromolecules to the hydrophobic surface.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 7, characterized in that applying the hydrophilic macromolecules to the hydrophobic surface occurs by a process selected from spin-coating, dip-coating, drop-casting, stamping, molecular combing, spraying-techniques, inkjet-printing and doctor-blading.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that exposing the hydrophilic macromolecules to hydrophilic species, whereby the hydrophilic species are attached to the hydrophilic macromolecules, occurs over a period of time between 1 second and 120 minutes.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 9, characterized in that exposing the hydrophilic macromolecules to hydrophilic species occurs over a period of time between 10 seconds and 10 minutes.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 4, characterized in that the solution is a solution of the hydrophilic species in water or of the hydrophilic species in a water-miscible organic solvent/water mixture.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that water has a contact angle on the hydrophobic surface in the range of from 30° to 110°.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 12, characterized in that water has a contact angle on the hydrophobic surface in the range of from 60° to 110°.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that the hydrophilic species is selected from the group comprising water soluble metal nanoparticles, semiconductor nanoparticles and dielectric (insulator) nanoparticles, hydrophilic clusters and metallic complexes.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 3, characterized in that the nanoparticle has a core and comprises a metal or metal oxide in the core, where the metal is selected from the group comprising Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Ru, Rh, Pd, Os, Ir, Ag, Pt, Au or combinations, especially alloys of these metals.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that the hydrophilic macromolecules are selected from the group comprising nucleic acids, proteins, dendrimers, latex spheres, polyelectrolytes, and water-soluble polymers.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 16, characterized in that the nucleic acid is selected from the group comprising DNA, RNA, PNA, CNA, oligonucleotides, oligonucleotides of RNA, A-DNA, B-DNA, Z-DNA, polynucleotides of DNA, polynucleotides of RNA, T-junctions of nucleic acids, triplexes of nucleic acid, quadruplexes of nucleic acids, domains of non-nucleic acid polymer-nucleic acid block-copolymers and combinations thereof.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 17, characterized in that the nucleic acid is double-stranded or single-stranded.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A method according to ~~claim 1~~ or claim 2, characterized in that the hydrophilic species is selected from the group comprising tris(hydroxymethyl)phosphine-gold nanoparticles (THPAuNPs).

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): A method according to claim 6, characterized in that the electroless plating solution comprises a gold salt and a reducing agent.

Claim 21 (Cancelled).

Claims 22 and 23 (Cancelled).